

Mid-Cambridge Neighborhood Study

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Summary, Recommendations and Action Plan



Mid-Cambridge Neighborhood Study

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Special thanks to Penelope Kleespies of the Longfellow Community School for helping to set up and host our meetings.

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Mid-Cambridge Neighborhood Study

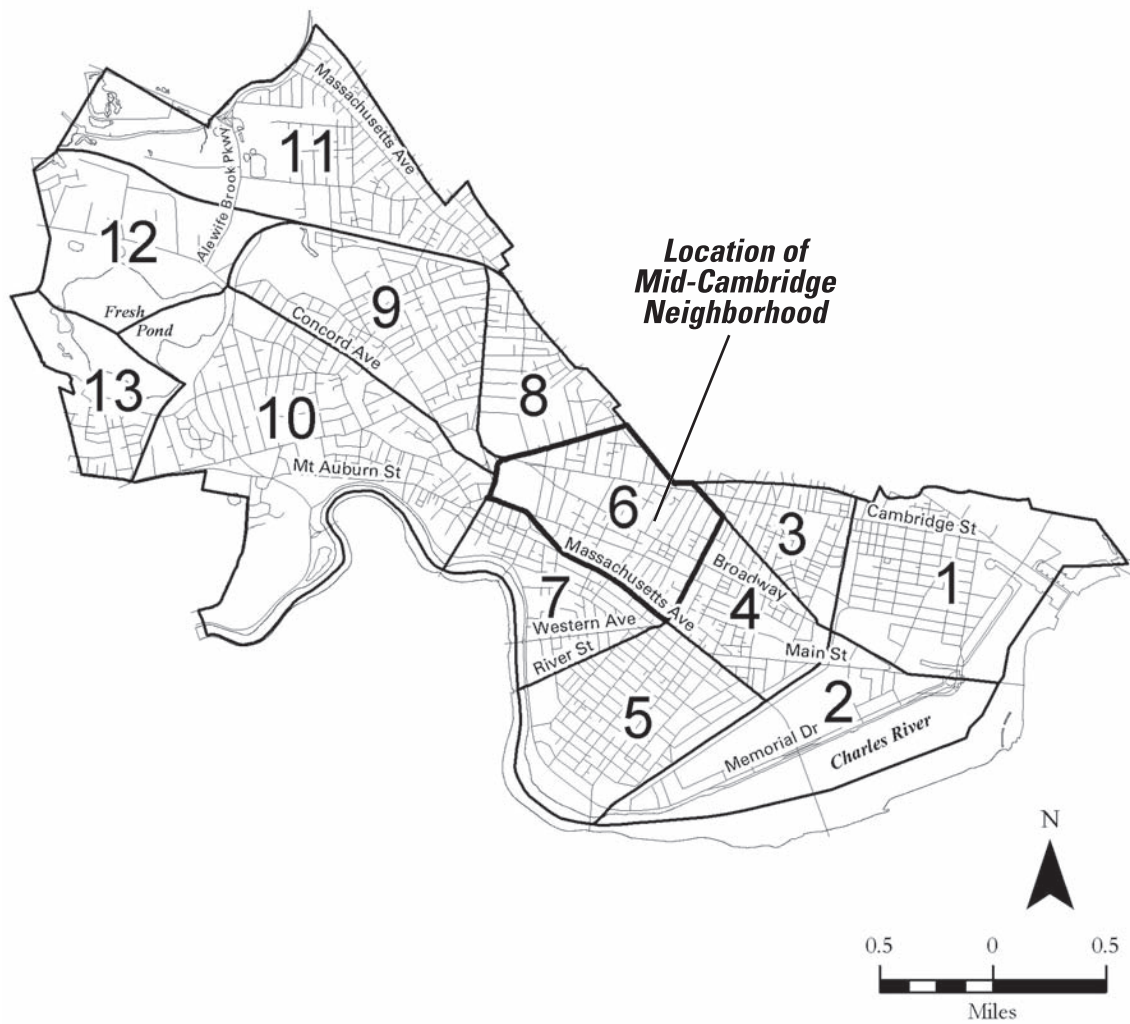
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Introduction



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Mid-Cambridge Neighborhood Location Map



History

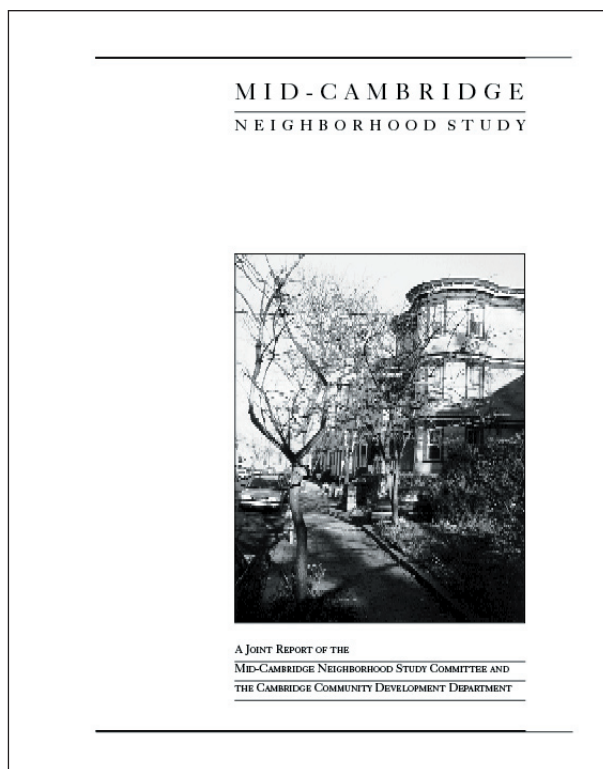
Since 1988, the Community Development Department (CDD), through its neighborhood planning program, has conducted comprehensive studies in ten of the city's neighborhoods. CDD staff work collaboratively with a citizen committee appointed by the City Manager to identify planning opportunities and make recommendations for a course of action. Recommendations address such issues as traffic and parking, housing affordability and homeownership, neighborhood commercial areas and employment, park maintenance, and rezoning

for areas that are inappropriately zoned. As part of each neighborhood study, CDD collects data on demographic changes, as well as changes in housing markets, land use, and development potential in each neighborhood. Where appropriate, the recommendations resulting from the neighborhood studies are incorporated into the work programs of city departments for implementation. In some cases, this implementation takes place over a short period of time, in others it is part of long-term strategic planning. The neighborhood study process has also informed the city's growth policy document, *Towards a Sustainable Cambridge*, which outlines planning assumptions and policies in the areas of land use, transportation, housing, economic development, open space, and urban design.

Neighborhood Study Updates

To ensure that these studies remain current and useful, CDD has begun the practice of periodic study updates. Each neighborhood study will be updated approximately every three to four years. The update process involves a series of public meetings, where community members are invited to comment on the original study recommendations, suggest new items, and prioritize issues. City staff from various departments attend these meetings to give presentations and answer questions as needed.

The end result of the update process is a "Summary, Recommendations, and Action Plan" document that is made available to the public, City Council, and city staff. The update process is intended to ensure that neighborhood studies remain current documents that evolve with the changing times.



The following are the goal and objectives underlying the neighborhood study and update processes:

Goal

To enhance and inform the delivery of municipal services through collaborative planning between citizens, City Council, and city departments.

Objectives

- To create a planning process that has input from community members.
- To inform members of the community by making neighborhood study reports available to the public, in print and online.
- To provide information to department heads and other city staff about community needs and values.
- To assist with the budget and management process.

- To formulate long-term plans for neighborhood improvements.
- To conduct work on a neighborhood level that is reflective of larger citywide planning practices such as the Growth Policy Document and the Report of the Green Ribbon Open Space Committee.

Implementation

The goal of these neighborhood studies is to create a strong link between community process and the everyday work done by the city's many departments. It is important that these studies remain an integral part of the strategic management, budgeting, and daily operations of city departments. For this reason, CDD will increase outreach to other departments while developing studies and, once they are completed, will communicate recommendations to relevant departments to be incorporated into their work plans.